

Thoughts on Books

CIA, a Usurper Or Good Servant

By ALDEN HOAG

The other war going on in Vietnam — the third or fourth other war—is between the Central Intelligence Agency and the rest of the U. S. mission in Saigon.

The CIA, which always maintains a stoic silence under whatever sting of detraction, fights if at all with deeds not words. Its foes are reportedly not silent: "Like a malignancy" . . . "not certain even the White House can control it" . . . "tremendous power and total unaccountability" . . . "if ever a coup against the government, it will be the CIA's" . . . "twice flatly refused to carry out Ambassador Lodge's orders."

From an aerie in Boston, 9,000 miles away, we can consult a late chief of the CIA and the appropriate Parkinson's laws for a clue to the truth.

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ALDEN DULLES, deputy director and director of the CIA from 1951 to 1961, pleads the defense of the CIA in a book called "THE CRAFT OF INTELLIGENCE" (Harper & Row, \$4.95, 227 pages).

Mr. Dulles concedes nothing to CIA critics. There was no intelligence estimate he knows of suggesting an uprising of the unarmed population would be touched off by the Bay of Pigs landing. The unfounded "bomber gap" and "missile gap" grew out of calculations of Russian productive capability and the Russians simply didn't build what they could. The CIA kept the government fully informed of the Franco-British-Israeli plan for a Suez invasion, and President Eisenhower's indignant surprise was over the failure of those countries to inform us officially. The U-2 flights were authorized and supported by appropriations recommended by the House Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. Dulles opens no CIA closets containing skeletons. When it is a matter of President Eisenhower's exploded cover story on the U-2, he simply says nothing.

But he does offer a plausible recapitulation of the democratic safeguards placed about this most undemocratic arm of government.

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THE CIA IS PERMITTED no police, subpoena, law-enforcement or internal security functions. It is (or supposed to be?) the servant, not the maker of policy. The director or the deputy director must be a civilian. The Bureau of the Budget and committees of Congress exercise control as of other government operations, except that the amounts are never publicly disclosed.

Mr. Dulles also says that CIA files, records and activities are open to the President's Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities, but this board was terminated by executive order in May, 1961.)

The CIA offers no threat of a government takeover.

But an intelligence agency replete with its huge stock of secret information inevitably will produce among its more zealous personnel a sense of special mastery of affairs. No doubt a Parkinson law obtains here. A CIA chief in the field will feel a unique competence.

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THIS, ACCORDING TO A NEW YORK TIMES dispatch, may be the trouble in Saigon. Ambassador Lodge feels that the CIA man there in carrying out policy operations is inclined to make the policy to suit the operations. Assertions that Mr. Lodge's orders have been directly countermanded are denied, but, given the incentives of the assignments, friction is humanly inevitable.

Tidbits from Dulles: At no time has our military position been inferior to that of the Soviets . . . One would not expect to find items of intelligence passed via call girls to be of high reliability . . . Good fishermen tend to make good intelligence officers . . . I found the lie detector important investigative aid in sizing up employees and almost as valuable in clearing people of suspicious and false charges as in providing clues to weakness or derelictions . . . Unrealistic to think tourists in the Soviet Union can be of much use in intelligence, but for propaganda reasons, the Soviet continues to arrest them.

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